



State of Arizona  
**Department of Education**

**Tom Horne**  
Superintendent of  
Public Instruction

CN # 01-05

MEMORANDUM

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TO: Administrators of the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and Special Milk Program

FROM: Holly Mohr, MPH, RD, SFNS  
Program Director of School Health & Nutrition Programs

DATE: July 26, 2004

SUBJECT: CNP Direct Certification Enhancements

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In the Spring of 2004 a Direct Certification Task Force was formed to make the CNP Direct Certification System easier for food service personnel. The Task Force was comprised of representatives from the Department of Economic Security (DES), the Arizona Department of Education, and several school districts. The enhancements made to the CNP Direct Certification System were based on the consensus of the Direct Certification Task Force.

Enhancements include:

- **Upload File - SAIS ID Search**  
SAID ID Search allows school districts to upload SAIS ID numbers only. The system does not check for SAIS enrollment within your district when utilizing this option.
- **DES Decision Date**  
The Upload File and State Match options will report a DES Decision Date that will provide a means to filter or sort match results to exclude 'old' information from previous uploads. DES Decision Date is the date DES determines the student to be eligible for DES benefits. **The DES Decision Date may not be used as the first day of eligibility unless it falls on the same day as the SFA approval date.** Instructions on sorting begin on page 35 in the CNP Direct Certification Manual.
- **Pending Result**  
Results that report "pending" are still in process, therefore the student is **not eligible** to receive free meals through Direct Certification until a "match" result is reported.

For more details on these enhancements, please refer the enclosed CNP Direct Certification Manual.

CNP Direct Certification Computer Based Trainings are now available. Please view the training schedule online at: [www.ade.az.gov/health-safety/cnp/nslp/computertraining.asp](http://www.ade.az.gov/health-safety/cnp/nslp/computertraining.asp)

## **Policy Change:**

**Temporary Approval for 45 days is no longer allowed through Direct Certification.** If you receive a case number that reports “No Match”, the student(s) are **not** eligible for free meals through Direct Certification. The student(s) may be eligible for free meals through income/household size.

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

- 1. Our school district attempted to run a State Match only to discover that the system did not yield any matches. What did we do wrong?**

ADE’s Direct Certification State Match is linked to both the Department of Economic Security (DES) and the Arizona Department of Education’s Student Accountability Information System (SAIS). The State Match method matches those students in the DES database against those listed in SAIS and then generates a list of matches for the appropriate school district. All Local Education Agencies (LEAs) – school districts and charter holders – are required to submit student detail information to the SAIS database at the beginning of the each school year. If your district has not submitted their current year enrollment information, State Match will not yield any results. Please contact your district’s SAIS Technology Coordinator to determine whether or not enrollment information has been submitted for the current school year.

NOTE: SFAs can determine the eligibility of their district prior to submitting SAIS enrollment information by utilizing Upload File – SAIS ID search.

- 2. How is it possible that one child in a household matched and another child from the same household cannot be directly certified?**

DES enforces a Benefit Cap (BC) policy, which means the mother received benefits prior to having the child and her benefits were "capped." Therefore, any further children she has will not be eligible for benefits. An income application may be completed for those particular children.

It is possible the household did not enter the child's name on the DES application for Food Stamps or Cash Assistance or the SFA does not have the correct name/spelling of the child. We encourage schools to call and obtain the Food Stamp or Cash Assistance case number and conduct a Case Number Search to verify the eligible children in the household. If the child is missing on the DES application, it is the families’ responsibility to contact DES and add the child to their DES application. The child must be placed in the paid category until they are matched or the family has the option of completing an income application.

- 3. What are the SFA’s documentation requirements for Direct Certification?**

Each School Food Authority shall print a report that identifies those children directly certified via State Match. Similarly, a report must also be printed to indicate those children that are directly certified via File Upload (Standard Format/SAIS ID Search), Data Entry and/or Case Number Search. **Direct Certification match results and/or income applications of those students who have been directly certified shall be kept in a separate file from all other income applications.** Documentation of direct certification must be kept on file for three years following the last claim filed.

- 4. The DES Decision Date reports that a student was eligible for free meals before the SFA conducted the match. The SFA has been claiming the student in the Reduced category. Can the SFA use the DES Decision Date to backdate and claim the meals as free even though the meals were served to the student prior to the match?**

No. The SFA approval date is the day the SFA runs a Direct Certification match and receives confirmation of eligibility. The DES Decision Date may not be used as the first day of eligibility unless it falls on the same day as the SFA approval date.

If you have any questions regarding this memo, please contact a School Health and Nutrition Specialist at (602) 542-8700.